

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DLOS-09 OES-07 DHA-02 ORM-02 AGR-01
ACDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 EPG-02
COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05
FEAE-00 FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 IO-13
JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-01 OMB-01 PA-01
PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /129 W
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R 170658Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3925
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USMISSION NATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, CSCE, NO
SUBJECT: SOVIETS BOARD NORWEGIAN FISHING SHIP IN DISPUTED
BARENTS SEA AREA

REF: OSLO 2760

1. PRESS REPORTED AND GON CONFIRMS THAT NORWEGIAN SHRIMP
TRAWLER "ALETTE MARIE" WAS BOARDED BY A SOVIET INSPECTION
SHIP IN BARENTS SEA WITHIN SO-CALLED GREY ZONE DISPUTED
BOUNDARY AREA ON JUNE 8. NORWEGIANS ALSO SAID LAW FORBIDS
SOVIET INSPECTION OF NORWEGIAN SHIPS IN THIS AREA OF HIGH SEAS
AND THAT NORWEGIANS ARE FOLLOWING POLICY OF INSPECTING ONLY
THEIR OWN SHIPS UNTIL SOME AGREEMENT IS REACHED ON THE AREA.
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THEY SAID THEY HOPED SOVIETS WOULD DO LIKEWISE.

2. OFFICIALS REPORTED THAT THE NORWEGIAN CREW SUFFERED NO
HARDSHIP AND WAS NOT INSTRUCTED TO LEAVE THE AREA.
SKIPPER OF THE NORWEGIAN VESSEL SAID THE SOVIET BOARDING
OFFICER SHOWED MORE INTEREST IN THE ANTENNAS AND THE
ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT ON THE BRIDGE OF HIS SHIP THAN HE DID

IN THE FISHING GEAR. THE TRAWLER IS NEW AND FULLY EQUIPPED ELECTRONICALLY.

3. DEFENSE MINISTER HANSEN INFORMED PRESS THAT NORWAY AND USSR HAVE AGREED THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO INSPECTION IN THE "GREY ZONE", AND HE FELT THAT THE RECENT INSPECTION BY A SOVIET VESSEL HAD COME ABOUT BECAUSE OF A MISUNDERSTANDING. DEFENSE UNDER SECRETARY HOLST ALSO SAID PUBLICLY HE CONSIDERED THE BOARDING A "WORKING ACCIDENT" AND SOUGHT TO DOWNPLAY IT. REPORTEDLY, LAW OF SEA MINISTER EVENSEN WILL RAISE THE MATTER WITH SOVIET AUTHORITIES DURING HIS CURRENT TALKS ON FISHERY MATTERS IN MOSCOW.

4. COMMENT: THE SOVIET BOARDING WAS THE FIRST REPORTED IN THE DISPUTED BOUNDARY WATERS AND CAME A DAY BEFORE NORWEGIAN BOARDING OF A SOVIET FISHING BOAT IN THE BARENTS SEA OUTSIDE THE GREY ZONE (REFTEL). THERE IS PROBABLY NO RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INCIDENTS EXCEPT AS AN INDICATION OF INCREASING LIKELIHOOD OF ENFORCEMENT PROBLEMS AND POSSIBLE INCIDENTS IN THE BARENTS SEA FISHERY AREAS, AND IN PARTICULAR IN THE DISPUTED ZONE. ADMIRAL HELSETH OF NORTH NORWAY NAVAL COMMAND OBSERVED THAT INCIDENT CONFIRMS THAT THE SOVIETS STAND FIRM ON THEIR BARENTS SEA POSTURE. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOVIET INTEREST IN THE SHIP WAS RELATED TO LARGE SOVIET NAVAL EXERCISE NOW GOING ON OFF NORTH NORWAY.
ANDERS

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 17-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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